



**INSTRUCTIONS ON SAMPLE COLLECTION  
FOR LABORATORY DIAGNOSIS OF  
MALARIA DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC**




**Anti-Malaria Campaign  
Ministry of Health – Sri Lanka**

ANTI-MALARIA CAMPAIGN

**Instructions on sample collection for  
laboratory diagnosis of malaria  
during Covid 19 pandemic**

---

© Anti-malaria Campaign Headquarters  
Public Health Complex  
555/5, Elvitigala Mawatha  
Colombo 5  
Phone 011-2588408/2368173/2581918  
Fax 011-2368360  
Hotline- 011-7626626  
Email - [antimalariacampaignsl@gmail.com](mailto:antimalariacampaignsl@gmail.com)

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div style="text-align: center;"> <b>Anti Malaria Campaign</b>  <b>Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medical Services</b> </div>  </div>					
<b>title:</b>	<b>Interim instructions to be given regarding sample collection for laboratory diagnosis of malaria during Covid 19 pandemic</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>Revision No.</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>26.03.2020</b>
<b>Replacement no.</b>		<b>Dated</b>		<b>Page no.</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Parasitologist, Anti Malaria Campaign</b>			<b>Date</b>	<b>26.03.2020</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	 <b>Director</b> <b>Anti Malaria Campaign</b> <b>Narahenpita, Colombo 05.</b>			<b>Date</b>	<b>26.03.2020</b>

Preparation of thick and thin blood smears using finger prick capillary blood is the recommended procedure for microscopic diagnosis of malaria. However, to minimize the possible spread / contact of Covid 19, following measures are to be taken when laboratory testing is performed for diagnosis of malaria.

- Preparation, staining and examination of blood smears should be performed taking stringent biosafety procedures. All samples should be considered as contagious.
- Close contact with the patients including collecting blood by finger prick is discouraged. Whenever possible, a sample of anticoagulated blood (preferably with EDTA) should be requested to be delivered to the malaria diagnostic laboratory at the hospital/ Office of the RMO/Central Laboratory AMC HQ. Blood should be collected by an officer trained to draw intravenous blood. (PHFOO/PHLTT are not trained in that aspect).
- If anticoagulated blood has already been collected for other tests a sample of that (minimum of 20 micro liters) can be sent for the microscopy and RDT for

Sample collection for laboratory diagnosis of malaria during Covid 19 pandemic

diagnosis of malaria. PCR assays will need approximately another 300 microlitres.

- If an anticoagulated blood sample cannot be obtained, the relevant PHFO/PHLT should prepare thick and thin smears by finger prick method. In addition when necessary RDTs should be performed using finger prick blood.

### ***Important***

- Necessary PPE should be worn under the guidance of relevant authorities by the PHLT/PHFOO or other individuals involved in drawing/handling blood samples for diagnosis of malaria.
- The outer surface of the vial/slide carrying box containing the blood sample/smears should be disinfected before delivering/carrying the sample to the relevant laboratory.
- When collecting blood to an anticoagulated tube, **it is important to draw the volume of blood recommended for the EDTA tube**. Since EDTA is hypertonic, collection of a small blood volume (e.g. 0.5-1 mL) than recommended will cause shrinkage of red blood cells, resulting in difficulty in proper parasite identification if present.
- Exposure to the pathogenic microorganisms harbored in blood, body fluids and other potentially infectious material (OPIM) can lead to occupationally acquired infections (OAI) in healthcare workers (HCWs). Therefore, it's critical that healthcare providers wear on key pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE) and understand the levels of barrier protection these PPE items can afford them in patient-care.

## **Annex i**

### **Contact details of RMO Offices**

<b>Ampara</b>	063-2223464	<b>Kandy</b>	081-2210687	<b>Matale</b>	066-2222295
<b>Anuradhapura</b>	025-2221844	<b>Kalmunai</b>	067-2220206	<b>Monaragala</b>	055-2276698
<b>Badulla</b>	055-2229560	<b>Kegalle</b>	035-2223480	<b>Mullaitivu</b>	021-2060007
<b>Batticaloa</b>	065-2222931	<b>Killinochchi</b>	021-2285517	<b>Polonnaruwa</b>	027-2226018
<b>Colombo</b>	011-2519284	<b>Kurunegala A</b>	037-2222193	<b>Puttalam</b>	032-2265319
<b>Embilipitiya</b>	047-2230301	<b>Kurunegala B</b>	037-2222193	<b>Trincomalee</b>	026-2222584
<b>Hambantota</b>	047-2258135	<b>Maho</b>	037-2275254	<b>Vavuniya</b>	024-2222954
<b>Jaffna</b>	021-2227924	<b>Manner</b>	023-3239547		